

Message Text

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51

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIEP-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 IGA-01 OMB-01 DEAE-00

SNM-02 DPW-01 IO-10 /086 W
----- 027281

R 291135Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1650

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PARIS

CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, LA

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ADDRESSES ROTARY CLUB

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE ADDRESSED THE ROTARY CLUB OF VIENTIANE ON NOVEMBER 25 ON THE SUBJECT OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARD LAOS. THERE WERE ABOUT 70 IN THE AUDIENCE, WITH THE CLUB'S REGULAR ATTENDANCE AUGMENTED BY SEVERAL MINISTERS AND SECRETARIES OF STATE OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION, INCLUDING SOME FROM THE PL SIDE, AND MEMBERS OF THE KING'S COUNCIL.

2. THE AMBASSADOR, SPEAKING IN FRENCH BUT NOT FROM A PREPARED TEXT, MADE PLAIN THAT THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTED THE PRIME MINISTER AND HIS POLICY OF NEUTRALITY AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, SUPPORTED THE PGNU AND WOULD NOT SUPPORT ANY ATTEMPT BY FORCE TO OVERTHROW IT. THE AMBASSADOR
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ADDED THAT HE BELIEVED RELATIONS BETWEEN HIS EMBASSY AND

THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT WERE IMPROVING AS SUSPICION GAVE WAY TO MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING. IF, HOWEVER, ANYONE DOUBTED THAT ALL AMERICAN AND THAI TROOPS HAD LEFT LAOS, THE AMBASSADOR WAS WILLING TO ACCOMPANY THE DOUBTER, ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME, TO VERIFY THAT THIS WAS THE CASE.

3. REGARDING AMERICAN AID TO LAOS, THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT THE ACTUAL LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE FOR THE CURRENT FISCAL YEAR WOULD NOT BE KNOWN UNTIL THE CONGRESS HAD COMPLETED ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE AID APPROPRIATIONS BILL. HE EXPRESSED HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT ASSISTANCE TO LAOS WOULD BE MAINTAINED AT APPROXIMATELY ITS PRESENT LEVEL. THE AMBASSADOR ALSO OBSERVED THAT FEWER AMERICANS WOULD BE INVOLVED IN DIRECT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AID PROGRAM AND CITED PUBLIC WORKS AS ONE AREA IN WHICH THE LAO COULD NOW TAKE A LARGER RESPONSIBILITY.

4. FINALLY, THE AMBASSADOR STATED THAT THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS AND THE FATE OF MIAS REMAINED MATTERS OF CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE IN THE U.S. HE ADDED THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT CONCERNED WITH THE NATIONALITY OF THOSE SEARCHING FOR AND INSPECTING CRASH SITES SO LONG AS THE SEARCHERS HAD THE NECESSARY TECHNICAL SKILLS. END UNCLASSIFIED.

5. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. COMMENT: THE LOCAL PRESS GAVE THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION. IN DOING SO THEY CONVEYED THE GIST OF WHAT HAD BEEN SAID WITH, HOWEVER, SOME INACCURACIES IN TRANSLATIONS FROM FRENCH INTO LAO. PRESS REACTION IN GENERAL WAS POSITIVE, WITH THE STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR THE PRIME MINISTER AND AGAINST A COUP D'ETAT RECEIVING PARTICULAR EMPHASIS. WE HAVE ALSO HEARD POSITIVE REACTIONS FROM SOME VIENTIANE SIDE OFFICIALS WHO ATTENDED. WE HAVE YET TO HEAR ANY LPF REACTION, ALTHOUGH LPF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FINANCE BOUTSABONG SOUVANNAVONG WAS OBSERVED TAKING COPIOUS NOTES. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. WHITEHOUSE

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